

*To the Chairman and Members of the
Urban District Council of Twickenham.*

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF
HEALTH, 1894.

Mr. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to submit my Eleventh Annual Report as to the Health and Sanitary condition of the Parish of Twickenham. The Report will embrace the vital statistics of the year 1894, which terminated on December 31st, and a summary of the measures taken for preventing the development and dissemination of disease.

Appended to this report will be found the usual tabular statements of the sickness and mortality within the district, both classified according to diseases, ages and localities.

compared to 1893 In reviewing the past year I am happy to record a decrease amounting to 23, and in comparison with ~~1892~~¹⁸⁹³ a decrease of 43 in the total number of deaths from all causes, and notwithstanding the increase of population the lowest number of deaths recorded since the year 1888. The death-rate for the present year is 12.1 per 1,000, and the mean for the past 10 years is 13.2 per 1,000. ~~1892~~

There has been an increase in the number of Deaths from Zymotic diseases, and notably from Diphtheria and Measles. These diseases will be treated of under their respective headings, as also the various Sanitary Measures which have been effected during the past year.

I propose now to place before you the vital statistics for the year 1894. These are calculated upon an estimated population at the middle of the year of 17,000. The Population as estimated at the Census of 1891 was 16,026. I may add that the number of inhabited houses was at that time 3,109, and at the present time 3,352.

The total number of Deaths for 1894 was 207, which is at the average rate of 12.1 per 1,000. This number includes 11 at Whitton, 7 at St. John's Hospital, 1 at the Boys' Home, 1 at the Police Orphanage, 2 at Kneller Hall, and 1 at the Powder Mills.

The number of Deaths in 1893 was 230, average rate 13.6 per 1,000.

„	„	1892	„	250,	„	15.6	„
„	„	1891	„	225,	„	14.3	„
„	„	1890	„	211,	„	13.7	„

The Deaths of persons of 65 years of age and upwards numbered

43 or 20·7 per cent. of the total number of Deaths. The Deaths of Children under 5 years of age numbered 88 or 42·5 per cent. of the total number of Deaths.

The causes of Death independent of those included in the six principal Zymotic diseases, and as recorded in the Table appended to this Report are 13 from Phthisis, 34 from Bronchitis, Pneumonia and Pleurisy, 16 from Heart Disease, 2 from Diarrhœa, 1 from Rheumatic Fever, 7 from Injuries, and 104 from all other causes.

The total number of Births for 1894, was 486 ; 211 males, 275 females, which is at the average rate of 28·5 per 1,000.

The total number of Births for 1893 was 468

„	„	„	1892	„	406
„	„	„	1891	„	444
„	„	„	1890	„	441


I will now proceed by setting before you a Table of the Mortality from six principal diseases of the Zymotic class, occurring in the last ten years :—

		1894.	1893.	1892.	1891.	1890.	1889.	1888.	1887.	1886.	1885.
SMALL POX	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
MEASLES	11	0	3	2	2	5	0	0	3	0
SCARLET FEVER	0	4	2	1	2	3	1	0	0	0
DIPHTHERIA	14	0	9	7	9	2	2	2	1	3
WHOOPING COUGH..	4	10	1	7	11	2	7	3	6	7
ENTERIC FEVER	1	3	0	1	2	1	0	2	1	2
		<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
		30	17	15	18	26	13	10	7	8	13

It will be necessary for me to make some remarks as to the two diseases, Measles and Diphtheria, which have been the most fatal in the above table.

MEASLES.—The eleven Deaths were of Children under five years of age. In almost all these fatal cases some intercurrent disease of the respiratory organs, complicating the original malady, was the immediate cause of death. Comparatively little care is taken by parents among the poorer classes to prevent the spread of Measles, not regarding it as a serious disease ; they naturally enough rather like to have all of the children down with it at one time. It must be allowed, however, that it is difficult to prevent Measles from spreading, the disease being highly infectious from an early stage, if not from the commencement of the attack. Circumstances, moreover, as a rule, almost preclude the possibility of isolation, but more care might be taken to protect the sufferers against secondary affections, which, as already stated, are, as a rule, the immediate cause of death.

The disease was prevalent during the months of November and December, in an epidemic form, among the children attending the Briar



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Road and Arragon Road Schools, and almost entirely confined to the Infants. It was thought advisable to close the Infant department of the Arragon Road Schools ; this was done a week before the breaking up of the School for the Christmas holidays, and the epidemic had almost disappeared in the central portion of the Town by the end of the year.

The connection between Schools and epidemic disease presents some important aspects. A School is peculiarly liable to the incidence and extension of such maladies, and epidemic illness is particularly important to both the School Authorities, and to the parents of the children, because of its interference with the health, and with the education of the latter.

Schools are peculiarly susceptible to any epidemic influences because they are closely aggregated populations of young people, of whom an unusually large proportion is unshielded by the protection commonly afforded by a previous attack of the malady in question.

Day Schools present conditions even more favourable to the incidence of epidemic infection than does ordinary home life ; for at such a School each child has specially frequent opportunities of association with a number of other children, and each of these latter is exposed to specially frequent and diverse risks of infection. Indeed, the avenues of infection from without are so many and so varied that it is humanly impossible to safe-guard any one of them.

Now Measles is essentially the type of an epidemic disease, which being infectious in its pre-eruptive stage, that is, before the characteristic rash has appeared, and while the symptoms resemble those of a common cold, cannot be stamped out by the isolation of first cases ; it, therefore, furnishes as a rule, extensive epidemics, which run a generally uniform course.

In our own case the first cases originating among the Infants might suggest the more early closing of that department, with benefit, perhaps, to the children, and I think, little loss to education. In the memorandum issued by the Local Government Board in 1890, it is stated that "the closure of Schools is a measure that seldom ought to be enforced, except in presence of an actual epidemic, nor even then as a matter of routine, nor unless there be a clear prospect of preventing the propagation of disease," or again, "it may be found better to close a School if by reason of the absence or exclusion of a large number of children."

With regard to the Notification of the Disease, most authorities are agreed that until there are means of isolation provided it would be futile to include this disease under the Notification Act, and many towns which had adopted the Notification of this Disease have since had the

order rescinded. I cannot, therefore, recommend the Council to adopt the inclusion of this disease under the Act.

I would suggest that for the future the School-master or School-mistress be asked to take note, especially when an epidemic threatens or is present, of symptoms occurring in any of their scholars that may indicate the commencement of disease, febrile in nature, in order that they may be immediately excluded from School, and that the School Attendance Officer distribute in every household handbills such as the following :

Care
“ Hints upon the Prevention and ~~Cure~~ of Measles.”

“ Measles is a disease which causes a large number of Deaths among children for the reason that most people look upon it as a trifling ailment, which children must have, and, therefore, they take no care to avoid the infection, and but little to treat the disease when actually present.”

“ The danger in Measles arises from the liability of the lungs to become affected, and this may be avoided by taking care that the patient does not catch cold. The skin should be kept warm, and the child should be placed in a warm but well-aired room, carefully guarding against anything that is likely to cause a chill, such as a draught from an open door or window.”

“ It must not be forgotten that Measles is most infectious or catching in the early stage, and, therefore, it is most important at the very beginning of a case to take every possible precaution to prevent its spreading.”

“ To this end the patient should be entirely separated from others, and no other child living in the infected house should be allowed to attend school ; and no child who has been suffering from the disease allowed to attend a school for three weeks after the appearance of the rash.”

“ DISINFECTANTS are supplied to the poor, FREE OF CHARGE, on application to

Mr. KNIGHT, Sanitary Inspector,
at his Offices, Queen's Road.”

DIPHTHERIA.—It is with regret that I have to record 14 Deaths from Diphtheria, 10 of these occurring in children under five years of age. The number of cases notified amounted altogether to 45, these occurred in 40 houses, all of which were inspected ; in nine houses sanitary defects were discovered, and these were subsequently remedied. In the early part of the year five cases (three of which terminated fatally) occurred in two adjoining blocks of houses, eight in number ; these houses were reported upon by me as being unfit for human habitation, and proceedings were

taken against the owner, with the result that a closing order was granted by the Justices. Flushing of the drains and disinfection was freely carried out. In March cases occurred among the children attending the Arragon Road Schools. At this time I inspected the Schools, examined the children, and any child suffering from sore throat was not allowed to attend. Fresh cases still arising necessitated me advising the closing of these Schools. These were accordingly closed from April 3rd to April 16th. During this time they were thoroughly fumigated and cleansed, and further provision made for the more frequent flushing of the closets, &c., which also were lime-washed and painted throughout. No fresh cases in connection with the children attending these Schools subsequently occurred. This disease has of late been the subject of much discussion, both as regards diagnosis and treatment. Some important lectures and discussions took place at the recent Congress of the British Institute of Public Health, at which Dr. Ward and myself were appointed delegates by the late Board. A resolution was passed at this Congress directing the attention of the Local Government Board and others to the importance to the public of the early recognition and accurate diagnosis of Diphtheria, and asking them to afford Medical Men facilities for such bacteriological assistance as may add to the prompt recognition of the disease. The importance of the subject has since been fully acknowledged by the Local Government Board and other Boards, and certain arrangements have been made which will enable us in a few months to decide not only upon the value of the bacteriological examination of cases, but also upon the efficacy or otherwise of the new method of treatment. We may reasonably hope, therefore, that the ravages created of late by this disease in and around London will become more and more limited. On the other hand, however, we must improve the sanitary conditions and the general surroundings of those who are most liable to the disease, in order to prevent the disease, or keep it at as low a limit as possible.

SCARLET FEVER.—Forty-three cases of this disease have been notified, against 187 during 1893, 25 of these were removed to and treated in the Cottage Hospital. Disinfection has been carried out in every instance, either of part of the house, or the whole house, if necessary, where the case has occurred. In one case, a child who was removed into this district while suffering from this disease, the facts were fully reported upon, and subsequently referred to the Local Government Board. I think that some such handbill as I have suggested in the case of Measles might with advantage be distributed in any household infected with Scarlet Fever.

INQUESTS.—Thirteen have been held during the year.

3 Accidental :

- 1 from Drowning.
- 1 run over by a Train.
- 1 from Suffocation.

- 3 Suicidal :
 - 2 from Poisoning.
 - 1 Cut Throat.
- 3 from Heart Disease.
- 1 from Meningitis.
- 1 Premature Birth.
- 1 Alcoholic Poisoning.
- 1 Pneumonia.

COTTAGE HOSPITAL.—Twenty-five cases of Scarlet Fever have been admitted into the Cottage Hospital, 21 of which were discharged cured, and 4 remained under treatment at the end of the year.

The following alterations and additions have been made in or around the Hospital during the past year :—

An additional bath fixed with hot and cold water laid on.

Three extra wash-hand basins fixed with hot and cold water laid on.

A gas stove for cooking.

Six new wire mattresses.

A new pantry is at present in course of erection.

A large portion of the garden hitherto used for growing vegetables has been turfed, to be used now as a recreation ground for the patients, the asphalt playground has also been enlarged. Mr. Poupart has gratuitously supplied twelve loads of good turf.

The alterations in the nursing arrangements have been the instating of Mrs. Rogers as head nurse, and Mrs. Hopgood as assistant nurse. These have performed their duties to my satisfaction, and I believe to the Medical Attendants who have had charge of patients in the Hospital.

INFECTIOUS DISEASE NOTIFICATION ACT.—Of the diseases in the above Act, ~~118~~ 119 certificates have been received, against 263 in 1893.

119

- 45 Diphtheria.
- 43 Scarlet Fever.
- 17 Erysipelas.
- 9 Enteric Fever.
- 3 Peurperal Fever.
- 1 Small Pox.
- 1 English Cholera.

A report presented by me in July, commenting on a circular

letter from the Local Government Board as to the advisability of adding Diarrhœa to the list of Notifiable Diseases for a short period, say of six weeks or three months. No action was taken in the matter.

WATER ANALYSIS.—Twenty-two specimens of well water have been analysed by me with the result that 11 were found to be good and fit for drinking purposes, and 11 bad and unfit. In each of the latter cases the Company's water has been laid on. Frequent analyses of the Company's water supply to the town have also been made and have always proved satisfactory. The floods in the Thames Valley, during the month of November, have been the severest since the year 1821 ; and it was not to be expected that the water supplied from the river would not show some signs of the flood. From a report of the London Water Examiners for the month of November, I note that although the water, in appearance, was "clear but dull," the suspended matter was of a harmless inorganic nature, and that it was otherwise chemically in excellent condition.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES, BAKE HOUSES, COW SHEDS AND DAIRIES :—These have been repeatedly inspected by the Sanitary Inspector and reported upon, and, when necessary, have been visited personally by myself. A close supervision has been kept upon all the above, to see that the necessary lime-whiting, white-washing, and cleanliness generally has been carried out. These inspections are very necessary as it is only by repeated visitations, in many instances, that they are kept up to the required standard of cleanliness.

Under the Factory and Workshop Acts, 1878, 1883 and 1891, regulations were drawn up as regards retail bake-houses, and a copy of these has been supplied to all the bakers in the parish.

Under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Act I have received declarations from the County Inspector, under the Act, of Swine Fever existing in three piggeries. In all these cases the styres were inspected, and subsequently disinfected, cleansed and lime-washed.

INSPECTION OF THE PARISH.—During the year the following nuisances were caused to be abated or sanitary defects remedied. 205 instances where water-closets or drains were blocked, defective or deficient ventilation to drains, or where some nuisance existed on the premises.

36 instances where the sink pipe was connected directly with the soil drain.

10 instances where there was no water for sanitary or domestic purposes.

3 instances where there was a nuisance arising from the frying of fish.

21 instances where there was over-crowding. Legal proceedings were taken in three cases for the abatement of the nuisance.

8 instances in which houses were condemned as unfit for human habitation, and a closing order granted by the Justices. These have since been placed in repair. The old closets, and one wash-house pulled down, the common yard being thereby materially enlarged. Four new closets, with automatic flushing arrangements, and a new wash-house, dust bin, &c., erected ; the sink pipes disconnected, and made to discharge over outside gully traps ; and water laid on to each house. A ventilating shaft has been erected at the dead end of this sewer.

12 instances where certificates were signed under Sect. 46, Public Health Act, 1875, for the cleansing and whitewashing of premises.

1 instance of a nuisance arising from smoke.

51 instances where houses were disinfected.

Amongst properties I have inspected, the following have been reported upon by me : Cole's Buildings, Stuart's Place, Queen's Square, Avenue Cottages, and the whole of those situated at, and near the Waterside.

Thirty-eight connections with the Main Sewer have been completed, exclusive of several houses in the Manor and Belmont Roads which have been connected with the Main Sewer.

Four new vent shafts have been erected.

The Sewer and Connections to Holly Place relaid.

Sewers taken up and relaid in Cambridge Park, St. Margaret's Road, Richmond Road and Waterside.

New Sewers laid in the London Road and Tower Road.

In concluding this Report, I may say that a good deal of Sanitary Work has been accomplished during the year, and I wish to specially mention that the number of houses inspected applies only to primary inspections, where a nuisance exists more than one inspection is always necessary, and there are also many instances in which work

has been done at the request of myself or the Sanitary Inspector without serving a formal notice. I may also state that Mr. Knight the Sanitary Inspector, has, in my opinion, efficiently performed his duties. Although much has been done, much still remains to be effected ; let us hope, therefore, that the future may be more prolific of improvement than the past.

I am, Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

Your odedient Servant,

W. MARSTON CLARK, D.P.H., LOND.,

Medical Officer of Health,

January, 17th, 1895.

Twickenham.

